

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for displaying a communication network in a graphical user interface (GUI) display, comprising:
 - displaying at least a portion of said communication network in said GUI display, including a plurality of network element icons representing a plurality of network elements and logical connections among said plurality of network element icons;
 - ascertaining a first set of properties associated with a first network element of said plurality of network elements, said first set of properties representing properties associated with said first network element in said communication network; and
 - displaying at least one visual indicator in said GUI display, said at least one visual indicator being displayed in a visually connected manner with a first network element icon representing said first network element, said at least one visual indicator visually indicating in said GUI display that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element in said communication network.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a visual icon other than said first network element icon.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different color for said first network element icon. said different color being different from a default color that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different shading for said first network element icon, said different shading being different from a default shading that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network..
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different background color for said first network element icon, said different background color being

different from a default background color that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes textual information pertaining to said first network element icon, said textual information being different from textual information, if any, that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different texture for said first network element icon, said texture being different from a default texture that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator represents a different shape for said first network element icon, said different shape being different from a default shape that is displayed if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one visual indicator represents a different size for said first network element icon, said different size being different from a default size that is displayed if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said first network element is one of a server, a subnet, a firewall, a VPN and a load balancer.

11. The method of claim 1 further including
ascertaining a second set of properties associated with a second network element of said plurality of network elements, said second set of properties representing properties associated with said second network element in said communication network; and
displaying at least another visual indicator in said GUI display, said at least another visual indicator being displayed in a visually connected manner with a second network element icon representing said second network element, said at least another visual indicator visually

indicating in said GUI display that said second set of properties is associated with said second network element in said communication network.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said communication network represents a logical network constructed from a common pool of network elements.

13. A method for displaying a communication network in a graphical user interface (GUI) display, comprising:

displaying at least a portion of said communication network in said GUI display, including a plurality of network element icons representing a plurality of network elements and logical connections among said plurality of network element icons;

ascertaining a first set of properties associated with a first network element of said plurality of network elements, said first set of properties representing properties associated with said first network element in said communication network;

ascertaining a second set of properties associated with a second network element of said plurality of network elements, said second set of properties representing properties associated with said second network element in said communication network;

visually indicating in said GUI display that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element in said communication network; and

visually indicating in said GUI display, simultaneously with said visually indicating that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element, that said second set of properties is associated with said second network element in said communication network.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a visual icon other than said first network element icon.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said visually indicating that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element and said visually indicating said second set of properties is associated with said second network element in said communication network occur in the same window of said GUI display.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a visual icon other than said first network element icon.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different color for said first network element icon, said different color being different from a default color that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different shading for said first network element icon, said different shading being different from a default shading that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network..

19. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different background color for said first network element icon, said different background color being different from a default background color that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

20. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes textual information pertaining to said first network element icon, said textual information being different from textual information, if any, that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

21. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a different texture for said first network element icon, said texture being different from a default texture that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

22. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator represents a different shape for said first network element icon, said different shape being different from a default shape that is displayed if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

23. The method of claim 15 wherein said at least one visual indicator represents a different size for said first network element icon, said different size being different from a default size

that is displayed if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network.

24. The method of claim 15 wherein each of said first network element and said second network element is one of a server, a subnet, a firewall, a VPN and a load balancer.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein said communication network represents a logical network constructed from a common pool of network elements.

26. An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium having computer readable code embodied therein, said computer readable code being configured to display a communication network in a graphical user interface (GUI) display, comprising:

- computer readable code for displaying at least a portion of said communication network in said GUI display, including a plurality of network element icons representing a plurality of network elements and logical connections among said plurality of network element icons;

- computer readable code for ascertaining a first set of properties associated with a first network element of said plurality of network elements, said first set of properties representing properties associated with said first network element in said communication network and for ascertaining a second set of properties associated with a second network element of said plurality of network elements, said second set of properties representing properties associated with said second network element in said communication network;

- computer readable code for visually indicating in said GUI display that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element in said communication network and for visually indicating in said GUI display, simultaneously with said visually indicating that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element, that said second set of properties is associated with said second network element in said communication network.

27. The article of manufacture of claim 26 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a visual icon other than said first network element icon.

28. The article of manufacture of claim 26 wherein said visually indicating that said first set of properties is associated with said first network element and said visually indicating said

second set of properties is associated with said second network element in said communication network occur in the same window of said GUI display.

29. The article of manufacture of claim 28 wherein said at least one visual indicator includes a visual icon other than said first network element icon.

30. The article of manufacture of claim 28 wherein said visually indicating said first set of properties includes displaying a visual characteristic for said first network element icon, said visual characteristic being different from a default visual characteristic that exists if said first set of properties is not associated with said first network element in said communication network, said visual characteristic representing one of a color for said first network element icon, a different shading for said first network element icon, a different background color for said first network element icon, a different texture for said first network element icon, textual information pertaining to said first network element, a different shape for said first network element icon, and a different size for said first network element icon.

31. The article of manufacture of claim 28 wherein each of said first network element and said second network element is one of a server, a subnet, a firewall, a VPN and a load balancer.

32. The article of manufacture of claim 28 wherein said communication network represents a logical network constructed from a common pool of network elements.